DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 380 202 PS 022 999

TITLE SuperStart Plus Evaluation Report, 1992-93. OER Report.

INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, NY. Office of Educational Research.

PUB DATE [93]

NOTE 39p.

AVAILABLE FROM Office of Educational Research, Board of Education of the City of New York, 110 Livingston Street, Room 732, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Classroom Environment; Cognitive Development; Curriculum Evaluation; Emotional Development; Language Acquisition; Learning Processes; Outcomes of Education; Parent Participation; *Preschool Children; Preschool Education; *Program Evaluation; Psychomotor Skills; *Regular and Special Education Relationship; Socioeconomic Status; Staff Development; Teacher Attitudes; Teaching Methods; Test Validity

IDENTIFIERS *Developmentally Appropriate Programs; *SuperStart Plus Comprehensive Prekind Prog NY

ABSTRACT

This report describes the background, program implementation, student development evaluation, and recommendations of SuperStart Plus, in New York City. SuperStart Plus, a comprehensive integrated prekindergarten program that serves general education and special education children in the same classroom, is designed to provide a developmentally appropriate learning environment to enhance the cognitive, social, physical, emotional, and language development of 3- and 4-year old children. The program included staff development and parent outreach services. In 1992-93, the program's first year, 337 general and special education students participated. The first section of the report presents the program's background and evaluation design, and the characteristics of participating students. The second section describes the program's implementation, dealing specifically with the classroom environment, instructional practices, continuity across grade levels, staff activities, parent involvement and family services, and staff perceptions of the program's strengths and challenges. The third section presents evaluation results indicating that both general education and special education students showed significant gains in motor, socio-emotional, language, and cognitive development. The general education students achieved greater gains than the special education students, but these results are presented with the caution that the evaluation instrument was not designed specifically for special education students. The general education students showed slightly lower gains in motor and language development than did students in the original SuperStart program, which did not include special education students. The fourth section provides recommendations from the Office of Educational Research to enhance effectiveness of administration, curriculum, staff development, and the parent component. A copy of the developmental profile used to evaluate participants in the SuperStart Plus program is included. (AP)

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OER Report

SuperStart Plus
EVALUATION REPORT
1992-93

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SUPERSTART PLUS
EVALUATION REPORT
1992-93
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 1992-93 academic year, the Office of Educational Research (OER) conducted an evaluation of SuperStart Plus, the New York City comprehensive integrated prekindergarten program which provides services to disabled and nondisabled prekindergarten-age children in the same classroom setting. Participants numbered 337 general and special education students. This report presents an evaluation of program implementation and student outcomes.

OER consultants' observations of SuperStart Plus classrooms and interviews with program staff revealed that the SuperStart Plus program provided a developmentally-appropriate learning environment that encouraged children's language, cognitive, social, and emotional development. Teachers used an appropriate balance of small-group, individualized, and whole-group instruction, including English as a second language (E.S.L.) as appropriate, and a variety of both child-directed and teacher-directed activities. Teachers also used multicultural strategies and materials in the classrooms; however, they did express a need for more age-appropriate multicultural materials and more workshops on promoting multicultural awareness.

To encourage continuity and coordination across grade levels, SuperStart Plus teachers and children visited kindergarten classrooms and shared social activities. In addition, program staff held meetings with participating families to discuss what they could expect when their children reached kindergarten.

Program staff participated in a variety of staff development workshops and cited those on multicultural activities, E.S.L. instruction, and language development as most helpful. They recommended that future workshops address such topics as classroom management, understanding children with special needs, and hands-on activities, particularly in science and mathematics.

SuperStart Plus sites offered parents a variety of workshops, opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, and social services, including home visits. Many of the parent workshops built bridges between home and school by encouraging parents and children to learn together at home. Other workshops for parents addressed health issues and adult development.

Program staff all agreed that the integration aspect of the SuperStart Plus program was most successful. Some of the teachers stated that integrating children at the preschool level was particularly good, because developmental expectations and activities were similar for both general and special education children at this age. They added that integration at this early age also allowed the children to work out problems, avoiding a more restrictive and stigmatizing environment.

While teachers felt that speech- and language-delayed children benefited greatly from the program, some felt that severely emotionally disturbed children were too disruptive in the classroom. Other teachers felt that the general education population needed to be strong, in regard to their academic and socio-emotional competencies, to ensure effective peer modeling.

Most of the program staff stated that parent involvement, where it was active, was another major success of the program. They felt that parent involvement created more continuity between home and school, enhanced communication, and helped to develop the children's self-esteem. Program staff reported that several of the parents who participated in the SuperStart Plus program were elected to positions on the P.T.A. and others went back to school or work.

Many of the teachers stated that learning to teach as a team was initially a challenge, but that with increased communication they learned to adapt. Some teachers cited the need for training in handling students' emotional problems, more time for team planning, and more opportunities for intervisitation. Some of the program staff also suggested hiring additional personnel specifically for SuperStart Plus, i.e. a speech therapist, a cluster teacher for coverage in the classrooms, and a coordinator.

OER assessed participating general education and special education students' developmental progress by comparing their pre- and posttest scores on the SuperStart Developmental Profile. Findings revealed substantial gains in motor development, socio-emotional development, language, and cognitive development for both general education and special education participants. In all areas, the general education students achieved greater gains than the special education students. These findings must be interpreted with extreme caution, however, because the instrument was not designed for special education students, and it is uncertain that administration and scoring were standardized.

The pre/posttest scores and gains achieved by the SuperStart Plus general education students were compared with those obtained by a sample of students in SuperStart. Findings revealed similar scores and gains across each of the developmental areas, with the exception of motor and language development. In these two areas, the SuperStart participants achieved higher gains than the SuperStart Plus general education participants. It should be noted that the sample of SuperStart students was much larger than the sample of general education students in SuperStart Plus.

Based on the findings of this evaluation, OER made the following recommendations to the program:

Administrative

- Provide a cluster teacher specifically for SuperStart Plus to allow the classroom staff to schedule common prep periods.
- Review the register of special education students in the integrated classroom to insure effective instruction and classroom management.
- Provide more time for staff planning and communication.

Curriculum

- Provide more multicultural materials and activities.

Staff Development

- Offer more staff development to address the specific needs of all staff members.
- Offer more opportunities for program staff and participants to visit other grade levels and to coordinate activities.
- Offer more workshops on team teaching and team building.
- Offer more workshops on promoting multicultural awareness.

Parent Component

- Provide more workshops for parents and include more topics on health issues, parenting skills, and adult development.
- Develop strategies to involve more parents and to avoid known obstacles to participation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by the Bilingual, Multicultural, and Early Childhood Evaluation Unit of the Office of Educational Research.

Additional copies are available from:

Dr. Tomi Deutsch Berney
Office of Educational Research
Board of Education of the City of New York
110 Livingston Street, Room 732
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 935-3790 FAX: (718) 935-5490

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I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In 1991-92, the Board of Education of the City of New York introduced SuperStart Plus, a comprehensive integrated prekindergarten program that serves general education and special education children in the same classroom.* Until this program was implemented, special education prekindergartners had been served only in nonpublic schools in nonintegrated settings (i.e., self-contained special education classes). The rationale for the integrated programs rested on research findings that identify integration of very young disabled and general education students as a crucial factor in reducing referrals to special education and increasing the rate of decertification of those students already in special education classes.

SuperStart Plus encompassed instruction, staff development, parent involvement, health, nutrition, and social services. The program was designed to provide a developmentally-appropriate learning environment to enhance the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development of three- and four-year old children. To foster cultural awareness and to build self-esteem, a multicultural component was integrated into the curriculum. English as a second language (E.S.L.) and bilingual services were offered where appropriate.

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*SuperStart Plus grew out of SuperStart, the New York City Comprehensive Prekindergarten Program that served only general education preschool children.

Program Design

Each SuperStart Plus classroom was staffed by two teachers (one general education and one special education) and two paraprofessionals (one general education and one special education). It was one of the program goals that all of the classroom staff would work together as a team. Staffing also called for two family assistants for every three classrooms and one social worker and one prekindergarten specialist for every five classrooms. Eighteen children were registered in each class: 10 to 12 general education and 6 to 8 special education children.

SuperStart Plus offered three types of integration models. One model consisted of a full-day program in which general education and special education students received integrated instruction in the same class for the entire day. A second model offered integrated instruction to general education and special education students for half the day. For both these models, special education children received related services (e.g., speech and counseling) on a pull-out basis. In a third model, the general education and special education students received integrated instruction for half the day, and for the second half of the day, the special education children received instruction in a self-contained classroom. The general education children were dismissed and another group of general education students received instruction in a self-contained setting in the afternoon. All of the program models, including the half-day session, were mandated to serve both breakfast and

lunch. The special education students, who are mandated to receive extra days of schooling, started the program two to three weeks earlier than the other students.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Sample

For the evaluation of SuperStart Plus, field consultants from the Office of Educational Research (OER) visited a sample of 12 classrooms in nine schools in six community school districts (C.S.D.s). A total of 23 teachers, 21 paraprofessionals, 210 children, 6 family workers, 3 social workers, 5 prekindergarten specialists, and 5 parents participated in the evaluation.

Data Collection

Trained OER evaluation consultants conducted interviews with program staff and parents and observed classroom implementation. To describe the demographics of student participants, OER consultants analyzed participants' application forms.

To assess participating students' developmental progress, consultants evaluated pre- and posttest scores on the SuperStart Developmental Profile. This profile, designed by OER, the Early Childhood Unit, and the State Education Department, is a checklist that teachers use to document students' developmental progress from the beginning to the end of the year (see Appendix A). Items to be assessed are developmentally appropriate and easily observed by the teacher, and the checklist can be completed without interrupting classroom activities. Using the Developmental Profile as a pre- and posttest, teachers assessed individual children's

gross and fine motor development; their social and emotional development; and their language, pre-literacy, and cognitive development.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

Parents with children who were eligible for enrollment in SuperStart Plus were contacted in a variety of ways, most frequently through school notices, flyers, or information passed verbally by friends. For the 1992-93 program year, a total of 337 students participated in the program. Of the 268 students for whom there were data on gender, 59 percent were male, and 41 percent were female. Data on ethnicity were available for 257 participating students, the majority (46 percent) of whom were Latino. (Please see Table 1.)

TABLE 1

Ethnic Backgrounds of Participating Students

Ethnicity	Number of Students
Latino	118
African-American	96
European-American	37
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	5
Native American	1
Total	257

Data on the dominant languages spoken in the home were available for 233 participating students. These findings are indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Participating Students' Dominant Home Languages

Home Language	Number of Students
English	145
Spanish	84
Other	4

EVALUATION REPORT

Chapter II describes program implementation, Chapter III presents data on student outcomes, and OER's conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter IV.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Program Models

Of the twelve SuperStart Plus classrooms OER consultants visited, seven utilized the full-day integration model, four offered the half-day integration/half-day self-contained model, and one offered a half-day integration model.

The Learning Environment

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) asserted in its position statement on early childhood education that developmentally-appropriate activities should be organized around learning centers, should be experience-oriented and interactive, and should take place in small group or individual settings (Bredekamp, 1987). Children in the integrated classrooms should be grouped together for all activities (Froschl, Colón, Rubin, & Sprung, 1984).

All the SuperStart Plus classrooms had discrete learning centers, an area for whole-group meetings, and clusters of separate work tables. The learning centers in SuperStart Plus were similar to those observed in SuperStart. All classrooms had centers for arts and crafts, dramatic play, and manipulatives. Centers for block-building, water and/or sand play, science, library, and listening were available in most of the classrooms.

All classrooms were amply supplied with books, blocks, small manipulatives, and the children's work. The majority of the classrooms had self-portraits on display and an experience chart. Teachers in most of the classrooms kept portfolios of the children's work.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

OER consultants observed teachers in all of the classrooms engaged in developmentally-appropriate practices that fostered children's language, cognitive, and social abilities. Classroom activities took place within a variety of social arrangements, including small group, whole-group, and individual settings.

Whole-Group Instruction

Once breakfast was completed, all of the classes began the day with a whole-group meeting. The teachers used this time to take attendance, introduce new themes, tell stories, discuss the weather, and sing songs. OER consultants' observations revealed that children in all of the classrooms were familiar with and able to follow classroom routines (e.g., using the attendance chart). Teachers extended children's language by asking open-ended questions and by incorporating the children's suggestions into ongoing discussions.

OER consultants observed storytime in all of the SuperStart Plus classrooms. Teachers read storybooks and encouraged the children's participation—children listened attentively and commented on the stories.

Evaluation consultants also observed the lunch period in all of the classrooms. In most classrooms, children helped out (e.g., passed out utensils and milk), socialized with peers and adults, and cleaned up as part of the daily routine.

Learning Center Instruction

Learning center-based instruction provided the children with small-group opportunities for free exploration, self-regulation, cooperation, and self-expression. Teachers reported that center-based activities helped them deal with the wide range of students' abilities. OER consultants observed teachers using these small group activities to offer individualized instruction, enabling the children to learn at their own pace. Children regulated their own learning as they explored the various learning centers. Teachers allowed sufficient time for children to complete activities and clean up and gave advanced notice of when it was time to stop one activity and get ready for the next. OER consultants observed children making smooth transitions between activities.

Cognitive Development

SuperStart Plus teachers used a variety of activities to foster cognitive development and to encourage the development of problem-solving skills. OER consultants observed children engaged in activities that involved counting, comparing, measuring, sorting, grouping, and arranging objects. For example, in one classroom the evaluation consultant observed the children sorting objects by color and size; in another classroom, the children counted and planted seeds.

Language Development

OER consultants observed a whole-language approach to language and literacy learning. Children expressed themselves verbally through dramatic play and "read through" and "read aloud" books. They used the materials in the listening center and played alphabet and matching games. Most of the teachers extended children's language by encouraging them to comment on their work and by introducing or reinforcing new vocabulary. Teachers asked the children open-ended questions and provided opportunities for the children to talk about their home experiences.

English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) Instruction

For those children whose native language was not English, the SuperStart Plus program integrated E.S.L. instruction into the curriculum. The teachers used a variety of activities to foster the children's language development. These included such strategies as tracing the shape of letters with one's fingers, offering visual demonstrations, providing children with hands-on experiences, singing songs in different languages, and repetition.

Multicultural Instruction

To help children learn about their own and other cultures and to build their self-esteem, the SuperStart Plus program stressed multicultural education. Teachers stated that they used an assortment of activities to foster multicultural awareness. These included reading stories, making crafts and foods representative of different countries, and celebrating such holidays as the Chinese New Year and Puerto Rican

Day, as well as observing Black History month. Displays reflecting cultural topics were present in only five of the twelve classrooms, however.

Although teachers used a number of strategies to promote multicultural awareness, most felt some need in this area. Many stated that they would like an age-appropriate curriculum guide of multicultural activities, and some expressed a need for more books and more materials on cultural diversity, lifestyles, and music, as well as additional workshops on promoting multicultural awareness.

Classroom Interaction

Both general education and special education children were fully integrated in all classroom activities with only a few exceptions, such as a special education child who worked one-on-one with an adult for most of the day. OER consultants observed children working cooperatively, sharing, and taking turns in all of the classrooms visited. The teachers reported that the children were able to discuss conflicts, play together, learn from one another, and show acceptance of others. If a dispute arose, they used such strategies as peer negotiation, modeling, role-play, and time-out to resolve the conflict.

CONTINUITY ACROSS GRADE LEVELS

To encourage continuity of the learning process across grade levels (a tenet of early childhood education), schools offered intervisitation across grade levels. SuperStart Plus teachers and children visited kindergarten classrooms and shared social activities. Additionally, teachers organized end-of-the-year meetings for

SuperStart Plus parents to talk about what they could expect when their children reached kindergarten.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

One day per month, designated as a nonattendance day, was reserved for staff development activities. These activities were coordinated at the district level. Teachers most frequently cited staff development in multicultural instruction, E.S.L., language delays and development, reviewing individual educational plan (I.E.P.) goals, and information on child abuse as being most helpful. They indicated that they would like more staff development on classroom management, understanding children with special needs, using I.E.P. goals as an assessment tool, and hands-on activities (particularly in subjects such as science).

All program staff attended staff meetings and were in frequent communication with each other. The majority of the teachers reported that they held daily meetings with their paraprofessionals and monthly meetings with the entire prekindergarten program staff.

Fifty percent of the paraprofessionals reported having daily informal meetings with their head teachers, 30 percent reported having weekly meetings, and 20 percent said that they did not have regular meetings with teachers. Prekindergarten specialists indicated that they met with staff members as often as once a week to as infrequently as once a month. Social workers met with family workers and teachers approximately twice a week.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES

The parent component of the program was designed to offer comprehensive parent outreach and support services to families of participating children. All SuperStart Plus sites offered parents a variety of workshops, opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, and social services that included home visits.

Parents' Participation in the Schools

OER consultants interviewed five parents. All stated that they learned about school events through notices, letters, and flyers. Two of them also reported hearing about such events from the family worker, teachers, and other parents. The parents told the evaluation consultants that they felt welcome in their child's school. They reported that they had volunteered in their child's classroom and had received some instruction on how to work with the children. Some of the parents also helped out on class trips and during special events.

The majority of the teachers stated that they had frequent contact with the parents via conferences, telephone calls, and letters. Only a few teachers felt that they did not have enough contact with parents. The majority of the paraprofessionals stated that they had contact with parents during drop off and pick up times and occasionally in the family room. Teachers reported that families of children with special needs were less likely to be involved because most lived outside the school's zone and found it difficult to reach the school.

Parent Workshops

All of the SuperStart Plus sites offered workshops for parents. Many of the workshops built bridges between home and school by offering such activities as educational games and making books. These activities encouraged parents and children to learn together at home. Other parent workshops were on health (e.g., immunizations, child safety, etc.), parenting skills (e.g., discipline, behavior management, and assisting with homework), and adult development (e.g., general education diploma [G.E.D.] and E.S.L. courses, AIDS awareness training, and battered women's counseling).

Parents most frequently cited topics that addressed parenting skills and adult development as being most helpful. Two parents requested additional workshops on health-related topics.

Parent Association Council

Prekindergarten specialists reported that a variety of school- and district-level personnel and parents were represented on the Parent Association Council (PAC). The PAC's role was to enable parents and staff to share information and experiences from the different program sites, to collect feedback on parent workshops, and to discuss strategies for enhancing parent involvement. One of the prekindergarten specialists stated that some of the parents in the PAC had become leaders and advocates for students as their children progressed through the school.

Home Visits/Social Services

The majority of the family workers conducted home visits only if there was a specific problem, such as excessive absences or an ill caretaker. The family workers also provided health and nutrition services, held workshops for parents, and distributed flyers, food coupons, and other information.

STAFF'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROGRAM'S STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Program staff agreed that the primary success of the SuperStart Plus program was the integration component. Teachers believed the program prepared the children for kindergarten and the school environment. Some of the teachers stated that integrating children at the preschool level was a good practice because developmental expectations and activities were similar at this age for both general and special education children. They also noted that the special education children were not stigmatized in the integrated setting and could work out many of their problems without being assigned to a more restrictive setting. Teachers commented that although there were some conflicts among children at the beginning of the year, they soon learned to get along with one another. In fact, one teacher stated that the special education children served as role models at the beginning of the year, because they had started the SuperStart Plus program earlier than the general education children.

While most teachers felt that speech- and language-delayed children benefited greatly from the program, some, however, felt that emotionally disturbed children were too disruptive in the classroom. They felt that at times these children's needs

for one-on-one attention and instruction were greater than what the staff was able to provide. These teachers recommended that no more than six special education children be enrolled in an integrated class, to allow for more effective peer modeling by the general education population. In addition, the general education population, itself, should be composed of students who do not have special needs.

Classroom Models

Most of the teachers who taught full-day models stated that they were satisfied with the length of their program because it allowed for more time to conduct activities than the half-day session. One teacher stated, however, that sometimes the day was a little long for children with emotional difficulties and for some of the three-year-olds.

Two of the teachers who taught the half-day integration/half-day self-contained model stated that special education children had more individualized instruction in this model. They felt, however, that this split in classroom configuration made it difficult to establish a feeling of classroom unity.

The teachers who taught half-day only sessions stated that sometimes they felt too rushed. This was exacerbated by the amount of time that had to be set aside for meals (they were mandated to serve both breakfast and lunch).

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement, where it was active, was also cited as a success of the program. Only four of the teachers stated that parent involvement had little to no impact on the classrooms. Most teachers and paraprofessionals felt that parent

involvement had a positive impact on the program and its participants by enhancing communication, creating more continuity between home and school, and allowing the children to feel better about themselves.

Paraprofessionals reported that parent involvement enhanced the multicultural curriculum, helped bring parents and teachers together, increased parents' awareness of classroom and school activities, and made the children happy. The family workers stated that although there were some obstacles to parent involvement, such as childcare responsibilities and scheduling conflicts, they found that good rapport, bilingual leaflets, interesting workshops, and ongoing communication helped to involve parents in the school. They reported that some of the parents who participated in the SuperStart Plus program were elected to positions on the P.T.A. Other parents went back to school or found jobs, and some became volunteers in the school.

The prekindergarten specialists felt that the SuperStart Plus program was generally successful in involving parents in the program. To improve the parent component of the program, they recommended forming a support group for parents, instituting regular home visits, hiring additional bilingual staff members, and providing transportation for those parents who live outside of the school's zone.

Staff Development and Communication

Teachers stated that learning to teach as a team was initially a challenge, but with increased communication they learned to adapt to the team-teaching approach, sharing leadership roles and educational philosophies. Some teachers cited the

need for training in handling emotional problems, more time for team planning, and more opportunities for intervisitation.

Paraprofessionals cited as challenges the need to learn how to handle children's differences and behavior and how to do team-building among the classroom staff.

The SuperStart Plus program support staff (i.e., prekindergarten specialists, family workers, and social workers) cited overwhelming administrative responsibilities, including developing the parent program, hiring and assisting new teaching staff, and team-building as most challenging.

The prekindergarten specialists recommended decreasing the class size and improving the family outreach program. In addition, they recommended hiring additional support personnel specifically for SuperStart Plus: a speech therapist, a cluster teacher to provide classroom coverage so that teachers can meet to plan and discuss student progress, and a coordinator. They also recommended that their own responsibilities not exceed more than two or three sites.

Family workers recommended that there be more staff development designed specifically for them, scheduled time allotted for home visits, and more parent workshops.

III. STUDENT OUTCOMES

DEVELOPMENTAL PROFILES

To assess participating students' progress, OER consultants analyzed pre- and posttest scores on the SuperStart Developmental Profile listing 41 positive behaviors or skills that are considered of developmental significance. The extent to which a child demonstrates each of these skills is marked according to the following scale: 0 = not observed; 1 = sometimes observed;
2 = often observed.

If a child does not yet exhibit a particular skill at the time of the pretest (scored 0 or "not observed") but displays that skill frequently at the time of the posttest (scored 2 or "often observed"), there is a two-point gain. Progressing either from "not observed" to "sometimes observed" or from "sometimes observed" to "often observed" is a one-point gain.

A comparison of pre- and posttest scores for 137 general education and 54 special education students revealed significant gains in motor, socio-emotional, language, and cognitive development. Both groups showed the greatest gain in the area of socio-emotional development. (See Table 3.) (These findings must be interpreted with caution, however: the instrument was not designed for special education students, and it is uncertain that administration and scoring were standardized.)

The findings of the 137 general education students in SuperStart Plus were compared to a sample, although much larger in size, of general education students

in SuperStart. These findings are shown in Table 4. A comparison of the gains achieved by these two groups revealed similarities across the two groups in the areas of cognitive and socio-emotional development. In the areas of motor and language development, SuperStart participants made greater gains than the general education students in SuperStart Plus.

TABLE 3

Mean Pre/Posttest Scores and Gains Achieved by SuperStart Plus Participants on the SuperStart Developmental Profile

	Number of Students	Pretest		Posttest		Difference		*t* value
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Motor								
General Education	137	11.85	5.16	19.36	2.92	7.50	4.52	19.35*
Special Education	54	11.19	5.35	17.20	4.32	6.02	4.93	8.89*
Total	191	11.66	5.21	18.75	3.50	7.08	4.68	20.85*
Socio-Emotional								
General Education	137	13.01	6.09	20.86	4.03	7.85	5.48	16.71*
Special Education	54	13.15	5.69	19.69	4.54	6.54	5.82	8.18*
Total	191	13.05	5.96	20.53	4.21	7.48	5.59	18.44*
Language								
General Education	137	5.26	4.39	11.99	4.76	6.74	4.61	17.05*
Special Education	54	5.02	4.48	9.91	5.04	4.89	3.95	9.01*
Total	191	5.19	4.41	11.40	4.92	6.21	4.50	19.02*
Cognitive								
General Education	137	5.47	3.85	12.87	4.29	7.40	4.00	21.57*
Special Education	54	5.09	4.22	10.89	4.57	5.80	3.59	11.76*
Total	191	5.36	3.95	12.31	4.45	6.95	3.95	24.25*
Total								
General Education	137	35.59	17.15	65.08	13.44	29.49	15.79	21.78*
Special Education	54	34.44	16.86	57.69	15.78	23.24	14.54	11.64*
Total	191	35.27	17.03	62.99	14.49	27.72	15.66	24.40*

*$p < .05$

TABLE 4

A Comparison of General Education Students' Mean Pre/Posttest Scores and Gains on the SuperStart Developmental Profile: SuperStart Plus and SuperStart

Subscale	Pretest		Posttest		Difference		*t* value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Motor							
SS (N=6,540)	9.22	4.82	18.08	4.12	8.86	5.06	141.59*
SSPlus (N=137)	11.85	5.16	19.36	2.92	7.50	4.52	19.35*
Socio-Emotional							
SS (N=6,540)	12.01	5.69	19.63	4.68	7.63	5.61	109.98*
SSPlus (N=137)	13.01	6.09	20.86	4.03	7.85	5.48	16.71*
Language							
SS (N=6,540)	4.69	3.91	11.88	4.74	7.18	4.55	127.61*
SSPlus (N=137)	5.26	4.39	11.99	4.76	6.74	4.61	17.05*
Cognitive							
SS (N=6,540)	5.25	3.73	12.45	4.24	7.20	4.38	132.93*
SSPlus (N=137)	5.47	3.85	12.87	4.29	7.40	4.00	21.57*
Total							
SS (N=6,540)	31.14	16.01	62.03	15.40	30.89	16.52	151.20*
SSPlus (N=137)	35.59	17.15	65.08	13.44	29.49	15.79	21.78*

*$p < .05$

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OER consultants' observations of the SuperStart Plus classrooms and interviews with program staff revealed that the SuperStart Plus program provided a developmentally-appropriate learning environment that encouraged children's language and cognitive, social, and emotional development. Teachers used an appropriate balance of small-group, individualized, and whole-group instruction and a variety of both child-directed and teacher-guided activities. Teachers also used E.S.L. and multicultural strategies and materials in the classrooms; however, they did express a need for additional age-appropriate multicultural materials and additional workshops on promoting multicultural awareness.

Most of the teachers were satisfied with the length of their particular program. A few of the teachers who taught full-day sessions felt that the day was sometimes a little too long for children with emotional difficulties and for some three-year-olds. Two of the teachers who taught the half-day integrated, half-day self-contained model stated that while this model offered the special education children more individualized instruction in the self-contained half of the program, it also had the effect of making it difficult to establish a feeling of classroom unity. The teachers who taught half-day sessions only reported that they sometimes felt rushed because of the amount of time used to serve meals.

Teachers stated that they found team-teaching a challenge at first, but that by the end of the year they had learned to worked together, sharing educational philosophies and responsibilities.

Teachers participated in staff development workshops and cited as most helpful those on multicultural instruction, language development, and the use of I.E.P. goals as an assessment tool. They recommended that future workshops address such topics as classroom management, hands-on activities (particularly in the areas of science and mathematics), understanding children with special needs, and I.E.P. goals. Family workers recommended that staff development be designed to address the needs of the different staff members.

The parent component offered workshops, opportunities to participate in the classroom and school, and home visits. Parents cited workshop topics on parenting skills and adult development as being most helpful. Parents' participation in the classroom enhanced home-school communication and helped build children's self-esteem. Some parents stated that it was difficult to attend workshops because of scheduling and childcare conflicts and problems with transportation to and from the school.

Participating students showed substantial gains on the SuperStart Developmental Profile in motor, socio-emotional, language, and cognitive development. These findings must be interpreted with extreme caution, however, because the instrument was not designed for special education students, and it is uncertain that the standards with which it was administered were entirely consistent. A comparison of participating general education students in SuperStart Plus with students in SuperStart revealed similar gains in the areas of cognitive and socio-emotional development. SuperStart participants achieved greater gains in the areas

of motor and language development compared to the SuperStart Plus general education participants.

OER'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Administrative

- Provide a cluster teacher specifically for SuperStart Plus to allow the classroom staff to schedule common prep periods.
- Review the register of special education students in the integrated classroom to insure effective instruction and classroom management.
- Provide more time for staff planning and communication.

Curriculum

- Provide more multicultural materials and activities.

Staff Development

- Offer more staff development to address the specific needs of all staff members.
- Offer more opportunities for program staff and participants to visit other grade levels and to coordinate activities.
- Offer more workshops on team-teaching and team-building.
- Offer more workshops on promoting multicultural awareness.

Parent Component

- Provide more workshops for parents and include more topics on health issues, parenting skills, and adult development.
- Develop strategies to involve more parents and to diminish known obstacles to participation.

REFERENCES

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Office of Educational Research
Board of Education of the City of New York
110 Livingston Street, Room 732
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 935-3790

S u p e r S t a r t

Developmental Profile

1994-95

Child's Name: Last (1) First (11)

Student ID: (19) Date of Birth: (28) / (30) / (32)

C.S.D.: (34) School: (36) Observer's Name _____

Class: (39) Class Type *(check one)*: Full Day ___; A.M. ___; P.M. ___

Student's Primary Language: (41) *(1 = English; 2 = Other than English)*

Date of Observation: (42) / (44) / (46)

DIRECTIONS: This checklist requires observation of the child while he/she participates in everyday classroom activities. It does not require any "staged" observation or testing situation. For children whose native language is other than English, item judgments should be based on cultural and linguistic appropriateness and be determined by qualified, culturally literate personnel in the child's native language.

Place a ☑ in the appropriate column for each question.

Not Observed	Sometimes Observed	Often Observed		
				Motor Development:
				Large Motor:
				Maintains balance when:
___	___	___	(1)	Running and stopping.
___	___	___	(2)	Jumping up and down (in place).
___	___	___	(3)	Throws playground ball underhand (using both hands in direction of target).
___	___	___	(4)	Catches playground ball with two hands against body.
___	___	___	(5)	Manages gross motor equipment (e.g., slides, swings, tricycles, climbing apparatus).

Not Observed	Sometimes Observed	Often Observed		
				Fine Motor:
____	____	____	(6)	Dresses self (manages buttons or zippers or snaps or buckles or boots).
____	____	____	(7)	Coordinates thumb and fingers to manipulate pencil, markers, crayons.
____	____	____	(8)	Coordinates thumb and fingers to manipulate scissors.
____	____	____	(9)	Puts together an 8-piece puzzle.
____	____	____	(10)	Strings beads.
____	____	____	(11)	Manipulates small objects purposefully (for example, inserts pegs into pegboards or puts together interlocking blocks).
				Social-Emotional Development:
____	____	____	(12)	Asks adults for help when needed.
____	____	____	(13)	Uses words to express emotions, conflicts, and needs.
____	____	____	(14)	Uses names of classmates.
____	____	____	(15)	Uses names of adults.
____	____	____	(16)	Follows classroom routines.
____	____	____	(17)	Demonstrates respect for classroom property and property of classmates.
____	____	____	(18)	Makes choices (able to make a choice when given an opportunity).
____	____	____	(19)	Demonstrates tolerance in taking turns.
____	____	____	(20)	Demonstrates tolerance in sharing space (e.g., while playing alongside another child at water table, block corner).
____	____	____	(21)	Participates or joins in small or large group activities.

Not Observed	Sometimes Observed	Often Observed		
___	___	___	(22)	Initiates activities (e.g., in block corner, house area, with manipulatives).
___	___	___	(23)	Participates in informal conversation.
				Language Development and Pre-Literacy Skills:
___	___	___	(24)	Communicates in an understandable manner.
___	___	___	(25)	Uses sentences averaging five or six words.
___	___	___	(26)	Retells an experience or story (e.g., provides a recognizable sequence of an event).
___	___	___	(27)	Talks about drawings or constructions.
___	___	___	(28)	Purposefully scribbles (e.g., writes names on attendance lists or items on shopping lists).
___	___	___	(29)	Has favorite stories and wants to hear them repeated.
___	___	___	(30)	Role plays reading by recalling the story.
___	___	___	(31)	Recognizes own name in print.
___	___	___	(32)	Attempts to write name on art work.
				Cognitive Development:
___	___	___	(33)	Demonstrates an interest in the environment (e.g., explores items in the science corner; asks questions about people, places, and things).
___	___	___	(34)	Completes simple tasks (for example, puzzles and lotto games).
___	___	___	(35)	Understands concepts such as big-little, inside-outside, top-bottom, on-off.

Not Observed	Sometimes Observed	Often Observed		
____	____	____	(36)	Groups objects by similarities and differences (e.g., fruits, animals).
____	____	____	(37)	Constructs with blocks (begins to construct what the child experiences or sees in the environment).
____	____	____	(38)	Paints, draws with crayons or markers (e.g. combines forms and begins to draw what the child experiences or sees in the environment).
____	____	____	(39)	Solves problems (e.g., while constructing with blocks).
____	____	____	(40)	Makes predictions (stories, classroom routines).
____	____	____	(41)	Makes estimations (e.g., using scales and measuring devices at sand and water table).

T o t a l s :

Not Observed	Sometimes Observed	Often Observed	
☐☐ 48	☐☐ 50	☐☐ 52	(Numbers of check-marks in each column)
(x 0)*	(x 1)*	(x 2)*	

____ + ____ = ☐☐ 54 (Summary score)

SCORING: Each item marked "Often Observed" receives 2 points. Each item marked "Sometimes Observed" receives 1 point. Each item marked "Not Observed" receives 0 points.